

Cooke, TonyMiracles and the Supernatural Throughout Church History Study Guide

5. The Move of God in Ancient Asia

Rick and Tony trace the Holy Spirit's work through the Early Church in Ancient Asia (modern-day Turkey), from Paul's ministry in Ephesus to Early Church fathers who saw miracles for centuries after the apostles died. The lesson argues that the same supernatural power is meant for the Church today, wherever hearts are open.

Key takeaways

- In biblical times 'Asia' meant the region we call Turkey. Much of Paul's ministry was there — Antioch (where believers were first called Christians), Galatia, and especially Ephesus.
- Supernatural isn't always spectacular. Repentance, deliverance, encouragement, and God sustaining people in crisis are all real workings of the Spirit, not just dramatic healings.
- Ephesus saw Paul's greatest work: special miracles, healing cloths, and occultists delivered who burned their books — a whole city turned from idolatry to Christ.

- Early Church fathers carried on this power: Ignatius of Antioch (graced to face martyrdom), Gregory of Caesarea 'the miracle worker' (left only 17 non-Christians in his city), and Gregory of Nyssa (healing and deliverance).
- The Early Church expected God to move. They partnered with the Holy Spirit by activating faith on the Word, and God confirmed the preaching with signs.
- These gifts continue until Christ returns. Where people cooperate with the Holy Spirit, He still moves mightily.

Passages worth keeping

“None of them accomplished these things in their own strength; they were simply activating their faith with the Word they preached, and God did the rest.”

Sums up the lesson's key principle for how the miracles happened.

How it connects

The chapter's thread is expectation: because ancient cultures were open to the spirit realm, believers looked for God's power and received it — a challenge to today's more analytical Western mindset.

Scripture referenced

- **Acts 4:29-30** -- Persecuted believers pray for boldness and for signs and wonders.

- **Acts 8:5-8** -- Philip in Samaria — preaching plus miracles bringing great joy; model for Gregory's ministry.
- **Acts 19:11-12** -- Special miracles through Paul in Ephesus; healing handkerchiefs.
- **1 Corinthians 1:7** -- The gifts continue until Christ's coming.
- **Mark 16:20** -- The Lord confirms the preached Word with signs following.